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PRESIDENT WASHINGTON.

I.

THE BIRTH OF THE REPUBLIC.

THIRTEEN SOVEREIGNTIES MAKE A NATION.

THE WORK OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION—ONLY WASHINGTON COULD BE PRESIDENT.

When Chancellor Livingston, placing one hand on the railing of the balcony of the old Federal Hall, and lifting the other high above him, called out to the multitudes in the streets below, "Long live George Washington, President of the United States!"—a long, grand shout arose from ten thousand patriotic throats and the first act of National Government in America was accomplished. All day long the people gave expression to their rejoicings. All day long bands played and soldiers paraded, cannon boomed and bells pealed joyously. All day long men shook each other's hands and pledged their loyal faith to the new Constitution and to the noble man, foremost among them all, whom with one voice the whole land had chosen as its first Executive.

But there were many in the multitude and many throughout the now united country whose faces wore an anxious and ominous aspect, and who shook their heads doubtfully. They had passed through six stormy years since their beaten foes had fled, and in the events that had preceded this day of grand and portentous ceremony they had perceived little of glory and less of promise and hope. Nor were they certain now whether the words Livingston had spoken were words of ill or happy omen. The Constitution had not been adopted without a mighty struggle. Arrayed against it in every State was a powerful opposition whose patriotism and sincerity were beyond all question. Governor Clinton in New-York; Patrick Henry and Richard Henry Lee in Virginia; Elbridge Gerry in Massachusetts; Sumter and Burke in South Carolina; Whitehill and Findley in Pennsylvania; Wadsworth in Connecticut; Atherton in New-Hampshire, and Chase, Mercer and Martin in Maryland, were some of the valiant and earnest men who had freely offered their lives for their country's defence, but who stood out in violent hostility to the National scheme of the Constitution. They were not impressed with the disasters that had come upon the land in the effort to preserve harmony among thirteen separate sovereignties or else they ascribed such evils as they were compelled to acknowledge to other causes than the feebleness of the central authority.

It is not here intended to go into the philosophy of the situation which finally resulted in the triumph of the Federalists, and yet it would be a poor account of the events now about to be celebrated which failed to attribute them to the common sense of the common people. Those were days in which the common people were held in small esteem, and nothing is more remarkable than the part they took in the establishment of the Government. The war had entailed sacrifices which even the lowliest of them sorely felt, and they were bound not to lose by internal dissensions and jealousies the prize they had so hardly won. They were sensitive to the sneers and prophecies of their enemies who, failing to subdue them, were waiting gleefully expectant of the reign of discord. They were not long in perceiving that anarchy was the inevitable end of a government which was without inherent authority, which rendered the greater dependent upon the less, which possessed no function nor the right to create one, which resolved in blindness and decreed in impotence.

Their Congress, whose early achievements were so magnificent, the Congress that, coming together as a sort of colonial conference, had seized the sovereign power, had raised and equipped armies, had launched navies upon the sea, had commissioned generals, had sent out ambassadors, had entered into treaties, had proclaimed independence, had formed international alliances, had contracted debts and levied taxes, and, performing all the highest offices of supreme power, had brought the war to a successful end, was now fallen into pitiful contempt. All its glorious deeds were forgotten. It had not so much as a home; kicked about from post to pillar, its authority defied, its promises laughed at, its recommendations ignored, it had become the butt of ridicule and the object of National disgust. The country was oppressed with a debt for which provision was neither made nor possible. The States were violating treaties to which the whole Nation was committed. Rebellions were breaking out here and there, which no authority was competent to subdue. Issues of paper money were making havoc with commerce. There was no security against foreign invasion, no power to prevent any of the States from provoking war with other Powers, or with each other, no right to establish a tariff, to collect taxes, to declare war, to conduct a defence, or to do any other act that rendered the States stable in common for consequences important to all. The very sovereignties for which the people had spilled their blood and spent their treasure were become the rock upon which all their hopes, all their ambitions, were being slowly wrecked.

To such men as Washington, Franklin, Hamilton, Adams and Madison this condition of affairs was unendurable. The Articles of Confederation were formed in 1777, and were entirely sufficient so long as the parties to them had but a single end, and that a common one—the destruction of a common enemy and the wresting from him of a common concession. But, that end accomplished, their paths diverged, their interests conflicted, and each State, jealous of its own rights, anxious for its own prosperity, regarded with undisguised suspicion all schemes of union that denied it an unqualified veto of whatever legislation it might deem objectionable. They did not deny that State sovereignty permitted to the edicts of Congress no greater value than attached to recommendations. When told that a strong central Government was impossible under such a conception of State rights, they serenely made answer that a strong central Government was precisely what they did not want. When warned that their plan gave Congress no power over war or peace, they promptly replied that they did not wish to be dragged into war against their will, nor to be forced to smother their just resentment, because other States were not aggrieved. There was no way to argue with men who only asked to be let alone. Franklin, who first proposed the project of colonial union, and who, now an octogenarian, held the office of President of Pennsylvania, was in utter despair. Washington, retired to his beloved Mount Vernon, was writing letters to Hamilton, Knox and Lafayette, full of grief and misanthropy.

At last, when every State in its turn had humiliated Congress, when New-York, repealing its former act granting the revenues of its port to the United States, now set up a Custom House and established a tariff of its own, when an open rebellion broke out in Massachusetts, when Vermont and New-Hampshire prepared to engage each other in battle over a disputed boundary, when the resources of the Federal treasury were to be expressed in pennies, and its debts in millions of dollars, when the Army began to show signs of mutiny, when paper money issued by all the States began to be valued at so much the pound, when internal commerce, fettered by all kinds of exactions, had dwindled away—at last the people began to appreciate what the matter was. The brilliant leaders of Federalist opinion became aggressive, and boldly proclaimed that State sovereignty was a dismal fetich. Hamilton revived his scheme for a Constitutional Convention, first drafted in 1783, and then abandoned for want of support. State after State declared in favor of Virginia's call for a conference, and in the flowery month of May, 1787, a body of the most illustrious men of the Nation, men who had served in Congress and on the battlefield, whose talents were conceded, and whose character was established, representing eleven of the thirteen warring sovereignties, came together in Philadelphia, charged to frame a Constitution under which it should be possible to give republican and confederated government a fair and honest trial.

Upon all questions relating to the Executive—of how many persons it should consist, how it should be selected, how long it should hold office, with what powers it should be endowed—the Convention was in the nature of things foredoomed to the liveliest kind of debate. But there were certain men present who knew that if this convention failed to accomplish the work it had been sent to do no other would be possible, and union would be out of the question. There were the greatest men there—Franklin, Washington, Hamilton, Madison—and they never once permitted the Convention to go in its disputes beyond the point from which the voice of conciliation and concession could not recall it.

Washington's words in the Convention were few, always spoken at critical moments, always and instantly effective. He had now reached the point in his career when his countrymen could see nothing in him that was not beautiful and good, when his personal enemies had all dropped into merited obscurity or had obeyed the promptings of their better nature and acknowledged his purity and wisdom. He bore himself in this supreme eminence with that same dignity, that same nobility and generosity of soul, that same unyielding devotion to his sense of duty which he had shown throughout the war. These qualities had rendered him in danger always resolute and calm; in defeat still hopeful and ever ready; superior to jealousies and bickerings; never resentful, and when victory came, modest and grateful to Heaven and to his generous country. Washington's greatness was not merely nor chiefly the greatness of a resourceful intellect. It was in the highest sense the greatness of a soul that knew no petty selfishness, but that, given over to the service of his country, was ever just, slow to think ill of any one, quick to forgive, utterly unbending from its exalted conception of the right and tireless in its pursuit of what it esteemed good for the common welfare. This was the opinion entertained of him by his contemporaries left for our information upon a thousand records. It explains the remarkable position he held in this historic assembly. It explains how, divided in all else, no one of his 3,000,000 countrymen so much as thought of any other Chief Magistrate. It is the necessary conclusion from all he said and did and it remains to-day, as it will remain forever, the judgment of all the world.

Several of the strongest men in the Convention were opposed to Wilson's motion in favor of a single Executive. Randolph declared that "unity in the Executive is the foetus of monarchy," and wanted an executive board composed of three members from each of three divisions of the country, geographically described. Sherman agreed with Wilson, but suggested a council which should have both restraining and coercive powers over the Executive. Wilson protested that councils of this sort "oftener covered venal practices than prevented them," and on June 4 his motion prevailed, seven States sustaining it against Delaware, Maryland and New-York. This vote was never reconsidered. In the meanwhile the Executive powers had been defined, though somewhat vaguely. He was authorized to "carry into effect all National laws and to appoint to all offices not otherwise provided for."

Gouverneur Morris, one of the most accomplished of the Convention's literary men, revised the draft of the Constitution, being one of a committee of five to whom that honorable labor was confined. Their report underwent some further revision, and then, on September 15, the question came up upon its adoption as a whole. It was plain that a majority in each delegation were in favor of adopting it, but several important members expressed dissatisfaction and moved that it be sent to the States for such suggestions as they might wish to make and then referred to another general convention. Gerry, of Massachusetts, and Randolph and Mason, of Virginia, were the principal malcontents. Mason, who had done so much to make it a wise and noble document, still saw behind it the grim shadow of a throne. Gerry's objections were numerous and trivial, but to his mind insuperable. Randolph, jealous of Madison, would neither candidly oppose nor openly favor, but endeavored to dodge. The States, however, negatived Gerry's motion for a new convention unanimously and then as unanimously adopted the Constitution as reported. For various accidental causes, several of the delegates were denied the precious boon of placing their signatures under it, but only these three, Gerry, Randolph and Mason, positively refused to sign.

Washington, full of happiness, lost no time in transmitting to Congress his report as President of the Convention, together with a copy of the Constitution, and Congress promptly sent it to the State Legislatures requesting that they summon conventions of the people to act upon it. The opposition to it was centred in Virginia, New-York and Massachusetts, and its most dangerous foes were Patrick Henry, Governor Clinton and Elbridge Gerry. It had been ordered by Congress that upon its adoption by nine States its provisions should go into operation, and the National Government should supersede the Confederacy. By the first of December Delaware's convention was in session, and on December 7 it had unanimously adopted the Constitution. Ten days later Pennsylvania, by a vote of 46 to 23, joined hands with Delaware, and in another week New-Jersey had also given a unanimous and favorable verdict. Georgia celebrated the new year by giving another unanimous vote in favor of the new charter of government, and Connecticut presently, by 128 against 40, came into line. The obstructionists had succeeded in working up a powerful party by this time and the progress of the country toward National Government was attended with enormous difficulties everywhere. All kinds of ingenious suggestions were made to defeat the Constitution, but its friends kept constantly before the public mind the alternatives—this or anarchy—and one after another the States fell into line.

II.

YOUNG NEW-YORK.

THE CITY AND ITS PEOPLE IN APRIL, '89.

A CIRCUMFERENCE OF FOUR MILES—THE WEALTH AND FASHION OF THE PERIOD.

In 1789 Manhattan Island beyond Chambers-st., onward to the Bronx, was little else than a wilderness. Between Chambers-st. and the Battery, and from river to river, as many as 25,000 people lived and toiled and warred together. James Duane, who was not unwilling to have people believe that an ancestor of his was called by the tongue-stirring name of O'Dubhaine, and, as the King of Meath, personally cut off the heads of all the rest of the kings in Ireland—James Duane was Mayor. He was rich, renowned as a lawyer, with a fine record behind him and a useful future before him. The city was divided into wards, not numbered, but named. The South Ward extended from the Battery along the Hudson to Wall-st., the dividing line between it and the Dock Ward, which ran along the East River to Hanover Square, being Broad-st. The West Ward included all the city west of Broadway, from Wall-st. to Chambers-st. The North Ward lay east of Broadway, west of William-st. and north of Wall, and ran up to the fresh water pond called the Collect, which, clear, deep and pure, covered several acres of ground where the Tombs Prison now stands and supplied the city with water pumped from the famous Tea-Water Pump, that stood not far from the spot where Roosevelt-st. runs into Chatham. The East Ward included Hanover Square, and ran north to Crown-st., which we prefer to call Liberty-st. now, and Montgomeries Ward, bounded by William-st. on the west and by the river on the east, ran north to Roosevelt-st. and the Tea-Water Pump. All that part of the city beyond the Tea-Water Pump was described under the general name of Out Ward. What is Pearl-st. now was Queen-st. then, at least until it ran into Hanover Square. Below the square the people of that day called it Dock-st., only that single block which fronted on the Battery being known by the name that is given to-day to the entire length of that ancient thoroughfare. In the old Dutch times it was a cow-path leading out from the city wall still called to mind by the name of that narrow length of street which now contains many of the strongest financial institutions of the world. The cows of our Dutch fathers laid out Pearl-st. on their way to Beekman's Meadows, below the Collect Pond, where they had their pasturage, and they took this circular route to escape the big hills that rose on either side of the depression still known as "The Swamp." The most northerly of these elevations was just above Frankfort-st., and until the beginning of the present century, when it began to be levelled, it was called Cow Foot Hill.

A ramble of less than four miles in 1789 would take one around the entire circumference of the city, which ran along the Hudson for less than one mile and along the East River less than two. The residents in Broadway and in Queen-st. had gardens extending to the water-fronts, where many of them kept private docks, and where quite a fleet of cat-boats could be seen floating at anchor or drawn up on the shore. Broadway and Wall-st. were the chief centres of wealth and fashion, though the founders of houses whose descendants are to-day conspicuous among the leaders of New-York society then lived, usually over their places of business, in the little side streets around Hanover Square. The Livingston house were in Wall-st., where Alexander Hamilton, Robert Troup, Daniel C. Verplanck, Nicholas Low and the Bleeckers also had their homes. Nicholas Cruger lived in Duke-st., now part of Stone, a five-minute walk from his great wharves. The Bownes and the Brevoorts, Samuel Franklin, who gave his name to Franklin Square, Robert Lenox, Robert G. Livingston, Effingham Lawrence, John Murray, jr., and Colonel Scriba all lived in Queen-st. The Broomes and the Barclays, old Peter Goelet and George McEvers largely monopolized Hanover Square. The Rhinelanders lived in Water-st. Aaron Burr, thirty-three years old, a colonel, the Inspector-General of New-York, and about to become a United States Senator, was practising law at No. 10 Little Queen-st., now known as Cedar-st. Already he and Hamilton were rivals at the bar, and already he had established a reputation for exalted talents and unfathomable meanness. Rufus King, younger even than Burr, was living at Maiden Lane and William-st., with his father-in-law, John Alsop. His bride, one of the most beautiful women of the epoch, dark, tall and graceful, equipped with an education altogether unusual and native accomplishments of a high order, received much attention, and was honored with singular marks of Lady Washington's regard. Colonel Duer, soon to be Hamilton's Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, a native Englishman, a favorite of Lord Clive in India, but, from his earliest residence in America a warm and true-hearted patriot, lived with his homely but brilliant wife, the Lady Kitty, in Broadway, just opposite St. Paul's. Lady Kitty Duer was the daughter of Lord Stirling. She and her sister, Lady Mary Watts, were cousins of Mrs. Jay, who was a Livingston. Chancellor Livingston's home was at No. 51 Queen-st., and it was the centre of the most delightful social circle in the city. His wonderful mother and his superb sisters entertained here with the largest sort of liberality. Their drawing-room was filled almost nightly with literary and artistic people. In the ordinary sense of the term, it was not an "exclusive" drawing-room. It was open to all whose ability and character had been demonstrated.

Gerard Beekman was back in his magnificent home in Hanover Square, from which the British had so long exiled him, where Admiral Digby had lived in almost royal state and had entertained youthful Majesty. Here Prince William, on a visit to the King's American dominions, had danced minuets with a certain sweet little Tory maiden whose portrait, probably in a grandame's cap, the present De Peysters may be able to show you, to whom he lost his royal heart and from whom the discreet old admiral bore him away in a hurry. In Wall-st. Mr. and Mrs. Jay entertained lavishly and with much of the ceremony they had acquired from long official residences in Paris and Madrid. Not far from them lived the Secretary of War, General Knox, in one of the largest and handsomest of houses, where, with the charming wife he had captured from a Tory home, he entertained munificently upon the fortune acquired before he left the counting-room for the camp. Across the street from the War Secretary's house was another, scarcely less conspicuous in the fashionable world, where Sir John and Lady Temple gave brilliant dinners twice a month and received every Tuesday from October until Lent. Lady Temple was the daughter of Governor Bowdoin, of Massachusetts. In Kipst., the Nassau-st. of to-day, and just beyond Kingst., which we now call Pine, lived the Mayor, Mr. Duane, in great state and affluence. His wife was a Livingston, and a woman of rare social talent. Richard Varick, for thirty years Recorder of the city, with his wife, formerly Miss Roosevelt, lived in Dock-st., below Hanover Square.

Two of the finest houses of this period were the Kennedy mansion and the home of Colonel Walton. The site of the Kennedy house, which remained standing until a few years ago as the "Old Washington Hotel," was at No. 1 Broadway, where the Field Building now towers aloft. More memories associated with events which are fastened immutably in history are attached to this ancient spot than to any other on Manhattan Island. The Kennedy house was built by Captain Archibald Kennedy, of the British Navy, who afterward succeeded to the titles and estates of the Earl of Cassilis. Captain Kennedy married Ann Watts, a daughter of John Watts, the Tory, and settling here, expected to make this house, then a veritable place, his permanent home. As well by reason of its situation as of its size and comfortable interior, it became, during the war, the headquarters of each commander successively. When Washington sent Lee to examine the defences of New-York in 1775, it was here that Lee found it convenient to stop. Here Putnam, till he was driven up into Westchester County, made himself as easy as might be. Here Washington himself stopped awhile before the capture of the city by Howe and Clinton. Here each of these Royalist commanders successively lived and held Tory court for Tory partisans. Here, at one time or another, Admiral Howe and Cornwallis, and Lord Clinton and Lord Rawdon, and Sir Guy Carleton carved out the honorless destinies of His Majesty's armies in America. Here Andre hatched the plot for which he paid the just and useful penalty. Here his dastardly accomplice was received and paid off, and here he narrowly escaped the avenging clutches of Major Champe. Here pretty Margaret Monerieffe made love to Aaron Burr, and with her lovely face and her Tory heart, the wonder is she didn't make an Arnold of him, too. Here the Baroness De Reidesel was courted by all who knew her, the queen of beauty and song. The Kennedy house remained for over a century in the De Peyster family, to whom it descended directly from Ann Watts. The De Peysters of that day were living in Queen-st., near Cedar, and their house was Washington's first headquarters in New-York.

The Waltons, like most members of the Watts and De Peyster families, were Royalists. Colonel Walton was rich and conservative. He had been getting along very well under the rule of a foreign despot and he was opposed to changes. They had a disturbing influence on business. His mansion in Pearl-st., at Franklin Square, was built in 1754, and everybody told him he was crazy to build so far out of town. His marble entrances, his imported tiles, his mahogany stairways, his great apartments finished in panelled oak, his decorated walls and his yellow bricks were the wonder and envy of the whole city. He gave sumptuous entertainments here which spread his fame abroad, and were quoted in Parliament in support of the Stamp Act. The site of the Astor House, a century ago, was covered by the houses of the Rutherfords and the Axtells. Mrs. Axtell was a De Peyster, queenly and beautiful, and devoted to the King. Their house, together with the properties of John Watts, Stephen De Peyster, Oliver De Lancey, Roger Morris, Beverly Robinson, Robert Bayard and many other Tory sympathizers, was sold at auction under the confiscation act.

The natural formations of the island's surface were much more distinct a century ago than they are now. There was a series of high hills extending from the Harlem with various interruptions almost down to the Battery. The ridge that the Dutch called Flafen Barrack Hill rose just above Bowling Green on the east side of Broadway and ran up as far as the site of the old Presbyterian church in Wall-st. This was one of the most ancient of religious structures, having first been built in 1619. It was rebuilt in 1748 of massive stone, crowned with a cupola and provided with a bell. Some years ago it was removed, stone by stone, to a site in Jersey City. It stood on the north side of Wall-st., about opposite the Stock Exchange. Below Smith-st., included now in William-st., and extending from Wall-st. to Maiden Lane, there was another eminence called the Pott Bakers' Hill. Beyond that came Rutgers Hill and Golden Hill, at the foot of which lay the Swamp. These were considerable elevations then, though they are now little more than ground swells. The City Hall Park, then called the Fields, or the Commons, contained three public buildings. They stood about opposite Murray-st. The first, fronting on the Commons, but with its side elevation on Broadway, or Great George-st., as this thoroughfare was called above the Commons, was the old Bridewell, forerunner of the Tombs. Then came the city almshouse, and then the prison for hardened criminals. The plot of ground now occupied by the Stewart Building was the negro burying ground. The block bounded by Murray-st. on the north, Barclay on the south, Chapel on the west, and Church on the east, was the seat of Columbia College. It had already been in existence thirty-five years. When it was building an English visitor wrote home his amazement that "people could have been found foolish enough to build the college at such a distance from the furthest limits to which the city could by any possibility extend!"

Fort George, detested by every patriot, had been standing until 1788 on the block bounded by State, Bridge and Whitehall sts. The people had concluded they were without further use for it and by order of the Mayor and Common Council it was torn down, and already the foundations were being laid for a magnificent mansion intended for the occupancy of the first President. It could not be finished in time, however, and when it was finally in condition for occupancy it began to be doubtful whether New-York would remain the National Capital. It never served the purpose for which it was built. Until the State capital was removed to Albany, however, it was used as the Governor's residence. Then the United States Government converted it into the Custom House, for which it served until 1815.

For a period of at least twenty-five years before the Revolution, New-York had enjoyed uninterrupted prosperity, her population increasing by a multitude every year. She was gradually taking her destined place foremost of all the American cities, and that she must soon come to occupy such a relation to the continent few doubted. Her wealth made her a rich prize for the British and they did not hesitate to avail themselves of all the booty they could get hold of. The city was full of handsome houses, built mainly of yellow brick, with tiled roofs and spacious gardens. The British officers did not hesitate to appropriate these to their own uses, while the "rebel" owners of them languished in exile or starved in prison. The invaders left the city in a wretched condition, many of its best houses in ruins, its churches converted by disease into pesthouses, its streets impassable. The returning patriots took on a brave heart and a bold face, and in the course of three years they had recreated New-York. Houses began to spring up everywhere. New streets were opened. Town lots in Broadway sold for $25 in 1789, and the low price attracted many purchasers. At the date of the Inauguration society had resumed its natural conditions, and a prosperous commerce had been built up. The farms above Chambers-st. were being tilled to great advantage, and many of the old country houses, repaired and refurnished, became during Washington's Administration centres of social and political influence. All the very wealthy people of that day, Walton, Kips, Rutgers, Stuyvesant, Lispenard, Morris, Wharton, Beekman, Murray, Apthorpe and De Lancey, in addition to their town houses, possessed country places and gave many brilliant entertainments therein. These families were much divided against themselves. It is impossible, indeed, to understand the social and political situation in New-York City after the Revolution without first getting at the bottom of these family relations. The two richest and greatest families were the Livingstons and the De Lanceys. The wife of Henry Walter Livingston, of Livingston Manor, was Mary De Lancey, and the Livingstons were related or connected with the Schuylers, the Beekmans, the Jays and the Duanes. The Livingstons were staunch patriots. The De Lanceys were bitter Tories. The De Lanceys were connected with the De Peysters, the Izards, the Barclays, the Frazers and the Stuyvesants, all of whom were completely distracted in their sympathies. Philip Schuyler, Alexander Hamilton's father-in-law and a patriot general, was a cousin of Oliver De Lancey and John Watts, two of the intensest Tories in New-York. Robert Murray, the great Quaker merchant, was a Royalist. His son John endeavored to be neutral, while his wife and his two daughters, to whose beauty and accomplishments Major Andre wrote that he "could not pretend to do justice," were uncompromising rebels. Society was naturally much cut up by these conditions.

One of the handsomest of the country houses was owned by James Beekman, whose ancestor came to America with Peter Stuyvesant. The Beekman house stood at the point where Fifty-first-st. intersects with First-ave. It was built in 1763, and was not torn down until 1874. The first hothouse erected in New-York was that attached to the Beekman residence, and it is said that on one occasion Mrs. Beekman, who was Jane Keteltas, served Washington and Steuben with lemonade made from lemons she herself had grown. The Beekmans were rebels, and they fled when Howe captured the city, but Mrs. Beekman had the forethought to bury her silver and china under the hothouse. It was all right when she got back six years later. Madame de Reidesel, whose Hessian husband was a prisoner, occupied the Beekman house so long as the British had possession of the town. Just above the Beekman house was the famous Kissing Bridge, which crossed Dedore's millrace, so named because it was supposed to be quite impossible for lovers to resist its fascinating influence if they happened to cross it. The homes of Colonel Kip, John Watts and Mr. Keteltas were in this neighborhood. Robert Murray's house, which left its name to Murray Hill, stood at what is now the corner of Fourth-ave. and Thirty-sixth-st. Mr. Murray's grounds ran down to the Kingsbridge Road, now Lexington-ave. His house was an immense structure for those times. It was here that Mrs. Murray and her beautiful daughters interrupted Howe and Clinton in their pursuit of Putnam, told them sweet little Quaker lies about Putnam's having passed four hours before, while, as a matter of fact, he had been gone not much more than four minutes, and begged them to alight and partake of some Quaker refreshments. They were not proof against these charming solicitations, and while Howe and Clinton sipped Mr. Murray's Tory Madeira and listened to the Misses Murray's delightful conversation, "Old Put" gathered his bedraggled army together above the Bronx. The Apthorpe House, Washington's headquarters during this campaign, was on the Bloomingdale Road, or, to be more exact, at Ninth-ave. and Ninety-first-st. Washington was well acquainted with this country. He had travelled through it in 1756, when young and susceptible, on his way to see Lord Shirley at Boston. He then stopped at the house of Beverly Robinson, and he stayed longer than he needed to. On his way home he stopped with Robinson again, and he only went away when he felt that duty pressed him. Pretty Mary Phillipse was also visiting there at the time. Her sister was Robinson's wife. When Washington left he told a friend that he had fallen in love with Mary Phillipse, but hadn't the courage to tell her so. When informed a year or so later that Colonel Roger Morris, who had fought with him under Braddock, was making a lively campaign for the lady's hand, Washington became philosophical, and let the matter drop. On his return in 1776 he found Morris and Robinson both enemies of their country, and when he marched over into Westchester he made his headquarters at Morris's mansion, more generally known as the Jumel house, its owners having precipitately fled. It is not believed, however, that Washington would have done them any harm had they stayed behind to greet him. The Morris House was a fine example of colonial architecture. Madame Jumel bought it, and Aaron Burr lived here during the days of his octogenarian love.

III.

THE ELECTION.

VICE-PRESIDENT ADAMS'S INAUGURAL.

WASHINGTON'S MODEST FEARS—ADAMS'S OPINION CONCERNING HIS SUPERIOR.

A spirit of calmness, confidence and peace settled over the country as the first Wednesday in January, 1789, approached, and the 3,000,000 free and independent suffragists of a delivered and united Nation prepared to cast their ballots for their first President. The election passed off quietly, not less for the reason that the people wanted to give the new system a fair trial than for the reason that nobody doubted what the Electoral College would do. The College met in due time and cast its votes. The Constitution then provided that the candidate having the highest number of votes should be President and the one having the next highest Vice-President. Every member of the College voted for Washington, and John Adams received 34 out of 69. The votes that were not given to him were scattered. Jay received 9, Rutledge 6, Hancock 4, but no one approached the position of a competitor. Adams had returned from abroad with much popular favor, due to his success in negotiating several important loans. He was obnoxious to many sincere and patriotic men, who thought him snobbish and not always trustworthy. Even the amiable Franklin had said of him: "Always honest and often wise, he is sometimes and in some things absolutely out of his senses." But at this moment the opposition to him was united and without a distinct object, so that his election involved no great trouble.

Congress should have met on the first Wednesday in March, the 4th, but distances were great and travelling was bad, so that only eight Senators and thirteen Representatives answered the roll-call on that day. They came in by twos and threes from day to day thereafter, and by March 30 a quorum of the House had appeared. It organized immediately by the election of Frederick A. Muhlenburg as Speaker, and proceeded to discuss a tariff bill. It was decidedly an able House. Madison led the Virginia delegation, though he had encountered much difficulty in getting elected at all. He was an aspirant for the higher honor of a seat in the Senate, but his activity in behalf of the new Constitution had rendered him so objectionable to Henry that he was unable to get a sufficient support. Madison had been badly humiliated in Virginia, for all the Anti-Federalist leaders had combined to crush him, and it was only upon his issuing a public letter in which he promised to support certain amendments to the Constitution that he had even succeeded in obtaining a seat in the Lower House. The election to the Senate of his chief political adversary and the prime enemy of the Constitution completed his discomfiture. He soon became, however, the most conspicuous member of the House, and easily its foremost man in debate. His only rival was Fisher Ames, of Massachusetts, his own only thirty-two years old, but eloquent, ready and pugnacious. A quorum of the Senate had not arrived until April 6, but the moment it could legally organize it placed Langdon temporarily in the Chair, sent for the House and proceeded to open the ballots cast in the Electoral College, and to declare the result. On the same day it dispatched Charles Thomson, its veteran secretary, to Mount Vernon, and another messenger to Braintree, to inform Washington and Adams of their election.

Of course neither of them was in ignorance of what the Electors had done. Washington had gradually come to consider his election as inevitable and his duty to accept it imperative. His profound reluctance again to quit the happy seclusion of his country home on the banks of the Potomac was manifested in ways too marked and by an agitation too solemn for any to call it in question. He has left his feelings upon a hundred tablets, all telling the same story of self-deprecation and regret that no one else would be acceptable to the people. Concerning the delay of Congress in counting the votes he had written to Knox:

> The delay may be compared to a reprieve, for in confidence I tell you with the world it would obtain little credit, that my movements to the chair of Government will be accompanied by feelings not unlike those of a culprit who is going to the place of his execution; so unwilling am I, in the evening of a life nearly consumed in public cares, to quit a peaceful abode for an ocean of difficulties without that competency of political skill, abilities or inclinations which are necessary to manage the helm. Integrity and firmness are all I can promise. These, be the voyage long or short, shall never forsake me.

To another friend, at about the same time, he wrote these almost pitiful words:

> I greatly fear that my countrymen will expect too much from me. I fear, if the issue of public measures should not correspond with their sanguine expectations, they will turn the extravagant praises which they are heaping upon me at this moment into equally extravagant, though I will fondly hope unmerited, censures.

"Little," says Washington Irving, recording these and other expressions of personal mistrust, "was its modest spirit aware that the praises so dubiously received were but the opening notes of a theme that was to increase from age to age, to pervade all lands and endure throughout all generations!"

Braintree was considerably nearer the seat of Government than Mount Vernon, and Adams had received the messenger of Congress and was well on his way to New-York before Colonel Thomson had reached the Potomac. It does not appear from any contemporary record that Mr. Adams was at all overwhelmed with a sense of the poverty of his worth. He appeared to be entirely ready to respond to his country's call, and on April 12 he set out on that errand. The Roxbury troop of horse, early on that morning, attended him at his house and escorted him into Boston. "On his arrival at the fortification gates," writes a chronicler of the day, "the bells rung a peal, and amidst the shouts of the assembled citizens, he was escorted to His Excellency, the Governour's, where the principal Officers of the State and gentlemen of the town being assembled, he partook at an elegant Collation provided by the Governour. He was saluted on his arrival by a federal discharge from a detachment of Mayor Johnson's Artillery, and also by a discharge on his taking leave of our Chief Magistrate. During the time the Vice-President was at his Excellency, the Governour's, the Middlesex Horse, under the command of Captain Fuller, arrived, which, joining that of Colonel Tyler's, formed a very elegant escort—both Corps being in blue, faced with white, and the horses mostly of one colour, and very handsome. By these corps, and better by his fellow-citizens, he was accompanied to Charlestown, where on his arrival at the Square, he was again saluted by a federal discharge, from Major Cabler's Artillery, and escorted, by the two companies of Horse to Cambridge—where the Roxbury horse took their leave of His Excellency—who, escorted by the Middlesex corps, continued his journey. Mr. Adams will be met at Marlborough by Colonel Newell's regiment of Horse, who will relieve Captain Fuller—and in like manner will this great and good man be accompanied to New-York.—Not with the servile attentions of slaves and subjects—but by the voluntary honours of his fellow-citizens."

In like manner, truly, he was escorted, receiving all the honors that could by any possibility be lavished upon him until, on Monday, April 20, he arrived in the city. A great cavalcade met him at the Connecticut line and brought him to Kingsbridge, where all the soldiery of the city, many members of Congress and a great host of citizens in carriages, on horseback and afoot, were waiting to welcome him. He proceeded directly to Mr. Jay's house in Wall-st., where he was waited upon by a committee of the Senate. Congratulatory speeches followed, and on the next day he was inaugurated. He took his seat as president of the Senate immediately, not waiting for Washington, who was already at Trenton. In his inaugural address, which was a stately and finished speech, he made these eloquent references to the man whose name was uppermost in all hearts:

> It is with satisfaction that I congratulate the people of America, . . . on the prospect of an executive authority in the hands of one whose portrait I shall not presume to draw. Were I blessed with powers to do justice to his character it would be impossible to increase the confidence or affection of his country or make the smallest addition to his glory. This can only be effected by a discharge of the present exalted trust on the same principles with the same abilities and virtues which have uniformly appeared in all his former conduct, public or private. May I, nevertheless, be indulged to inquire, if we look over the catalogue of the first Magistrates of nations, whether they have been denominated Presidents or Consuls, Kings or Princes, where shall we find one whose commanding talents and virtues, whose overruling good fortune, have so completely united all hearts and voices in his favor?"

IV.

WASHINGTON'S JOURNEY.

THE IDOL OF THE PEOPLE.

THE RECEPTION IN NEW-YORK—A GREAT PARADE.

Secretary Thomson reached Mount Vernon on April 14, and delivered Langdon's letter to the President. It said, in fitting and simple words: "I have the honor to transmit to your Excellency the information of your unanimous election to the office of President of the United States of America. Suffer me, sir, to indulge the hope that so distinguished a mark of public confidence will meet your approbation and be considered as a sure pledge of the affection and support you are to expect from a free and an enlightened people." Washington invited Mr. Thomson to wait a day or two at Mount Vernon and return with him to the capital. The next day he visited his aged mother, and said and listened to the words that each knew would be the last they would ever speak to each other in this world again. He returned to his home the same day, and on the next he started for the capital. In his diary on that day he wrote: "About 10 o'clock I bade adieu to Mount Vernon, to private life and to domestic felicity, and with a mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensations than I have words to express, set out for New-York, with the best disposition to render service to my country in obedience to its call, but with less hope of answering its expectations." Mrs. Washington remained for a time at Mount Vernon, and the only occupants of the President's coach besides himself were Mr. Thomson and his former aide, Colonel Humphreys. The President consented to partake of a farewell banquet at Alexandria, attended chiefly by his intimate friends and neighbors. The Mayor, Dennis Ramsay, made an eloquent and feeling address, in which he said:

> Not to extol your glory as a soldier, not to pour forth our gratitude for past services, not to acknowledge the justice of the unexampled honor which has been conferred upon you by the spontaneous and unanimous suffrages of 3,000,000 of freemen in your election to the Supreme Magistracy, not to admire the patriotism which directs your conduct, do your neighbors and friends now address you. Themes less splendid, but more endearing, impress our minds. The first and best of citizens must leave us. Our aged must lose their ornament, our youth their model, our agriculture its improver, our commerce its friend, our infant academy its patron, our poor their benefactor!

Washington was much touched by these expressions, and his reply was spoken with an emotion he was quite unable to hide. He said:

> Although I ought not to conceal, yet I cannot describe, the painful emotions I felt in being called upon to determine whether I would accept or refuse the Presidency of the United States. The unanimity in the choice, the opinion of my friends, communicated from different parts of Europe, as well as America, the apparent wish of those who were not entirely satisfied with the Constitution in its present form, and an ardent desire on my own part to be instrumental in conciliating the goodwill of my countrymen toward each other, have induced an acceptance. Those who know me best and you, my fellow-citizens, are, from your situation, in that number) know better than any others that my love of retirement is so great that no earthly consideration, short of a conviction of duty, could have prevailed upon me to depart from my resolution "never more to take any share in transactions of a public nature."

Almost every step of his route from Alexandria to New-York was made memorable by some token of the veneration and love in which the people held him. At first and until he had reached Chester he tried to escape these attentions, or at least to receive them without seeming to enjoy them. He did not in fact enjoy them. They were little in keeping with his own thoughts and feelings. Washington was an isolated being. His human sympathies, it is true, were large, but they did not proceed from human weaknesses, as those of frail mortality usually do. Washington had started off quietly in his coach from Mount Vernon, and he would have much preferred to complete his journey as quietly as he began it. But he soon thought better of this, and far from desiring to escape popular demonstrations, he encouraged and took his proper part in them. He wisely perceived that nothing could be more natural than that the people should hail with lively manifestations of pleasure the dawn of the Nation's birthday. The feelings they entertained he shared, and moved by this sentiment he permitted the widest latitude to be given to expressions of the popular joy, and everywhere delayed his journey to take part in them. Although in this construction of the honors lavished so abundantly upon him Washington did no violence to the people's glad and hopeful hearts, he did not wholly understand them. He never did quite understand the relation in which he stood to the land he had delivered. Perhaps it is only natural, certainly it is most beautiful, that a soul capable of the deeds which so inspired the popular heart with the highest form of esteem, confidence and love should be unconscious of exalted merit